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not "academic," for which reason, in my mind, one would do well to be grounded in drawing before going to Mr. Whistler. It was not "academic," but it was a great artistic revelation. For what but a clod without a spark is painting that is not animated by a soul? Here is a master who feels the fine dignity in everything he renders, a magician who extracts from men and things their spiritual essence. It is in this last, in his spirituality, that Mr. Whistler seems to exceed that "master from Madrid" himself, for whom he has such admiration, and to whose art his own bears much kinship.

LOUISE W. JACKSON.



THE EDITOR

The recent death of Munkacsy brought to a close a career of extraordinary brilliancy and popularity, shaded at the end by his unfortunate mental condition. Thirty years or so ago he appeared like a meteor in the realm of painting, and his "Last Days of the Condemned," owned in Philadelphia, brought him immediate renown. His own influence and that of the schools of Germany were prominent among the younger American painters abroad. Dark tones and bitumen backgrounds were the proper modes of expression. Chase and Duveneck, in the later seventies, were among the strongest Americans who followed this tendency. The recent landscapes of Chase are alone sufficient to show how completely this German tendency in technique has been overcome, directly or indirectly, by the influence of French schools. The impressionists have laid at rest this old-fashioned style of painting. To be sure, the dark pictures are à la mode again, but they revert to the acts and teaching of Velasquez via Whistler, and have no connection with the Munich movement.

This life-span of Munkacsy measures the American art movement during the last thirty years, for he stood so characteristically for the earlier style, while no one in America follows his methods to-day. The influence on the American art students abroad who are now distinguished contributors to our exhibitions was first German, then French. It goes without saying that the student to-day goes to France to finish his education; the picture-buyer patronizes the French artist, and the French influence is the prominent one in our homes, schools, museums, galleries, and studios. How long this will continue time will disclose. There are evidences that the American influence will be the conspicuous one with us. We hope so, for there is a large body of well-trained artists and laymen who are now thoroughly established here, working hard and adapting their power and training to home needs. A slow transformation is taking place in many characteristic and

natural ways. New schools, new problems, will before long create a decided national sentiment, which will find expression in a virile and unique national art.



The second annual exhibition of public school work in drawing, held May 16th, 17th, and 18th, at the University of Illinois, at Champaign, included comprehensive displays from nine different cities. The work covered the walls of a large gallery, and comprised specimen drawings from the primary to the high school grades. The exhibit sent from the La Salle-Peru high school was easily the best, and made a remarkable showing of public school work. It proved that the instructor was competent to teach his subject; something we are not always able to say when we refer to drawing teachers.

The new movement of freedom of handling and story-telling illustration was much in evidence. This idea of allowing a very young student to express himself pictorially before he has much notion of things or any means of expression has much to commend it, and very much to be said against it. It is a fact that no considerable improvement in this sort of work is seen in the higher grades. The reason is obvious. The teacher, from lack of training and ability, is unable to assist the pupil to improve his work by judicious criticism and helpful suggestion. Technical accuracy and elementary knowledge of form was conspicuously absent. It is well enough to allow the student to play a little with form and expression of idea, but he should be led to appreciate also, at the same time, the representation of real form. Mechanical drudgery should be avoided, but no system of drawing can be effectual if drawing is left out. Fads are rampant in our present system. There is a reaction from the old uninteresting methods, but the new movement of thought expression must not go too far. Splendid work in drawing nature forms were seen, and this sort of work cannot be too highly commended. It teaches drawing in a direct, sensible fashion, and opens the eye of the student to the beauties of the everyday world around him. This ability to draw nature forms is of the greatest advantage to the student in illustrating other branches of his school work. Drawing is the natural means of awakening observation, and its increased importance in the public schools we hail with joy. The effect of this exhibition will go toward stimulating still greater interest in public school art work in Illinois.